
To obtain the number for your local officials, or if you believe you are eligible to vote and encounter difficulty registering, you may contact the Division of Elections of the Secretary of State:

Office of the Secretary of State
Division of Elections
101 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0101
(207) 287-4186 (voice)
(207) 287-6545 (fax)
www.state.me.us/sos

If the Maine Secretary of State is unable to help you, or to report a problem, contact:

United States Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division
Post Office Box 66128
Washington, D.C. 20035
(202) 307-2767 (voice)
(800) 253-3931 (toll-free)
(202) 307-3961 (fax)
www.usdoj.gov/crt

This pamphlet is provided for informational purposes only, as an aid to further inquiry. The laws in many states are revised frequently, and may have changed since this pamphlet was issued. It is your responsibility to determine whether you are lawfully eligible to vote, and criminal penalties can result from voting when ineligible or making false statements on a registration form.

Issued December, 2000

U.S. Department of Justice

Civil Rights Division



Restoring Your Right to Vote



The right to vote is an important civil right in a democracy as well as a civic responsibility, and yet many persons who have been convicted of a crime do not know whether they are eligible to vote. For both federal and state elections, the right to vote is controlled by the law of the state in which you live. Some states restrict the right to vote for persons who have been convicted of a crime. This pamphlet is intended to help you determine whether you are eligible to vote in the state in which you live, and if so, what steps you must take to be permitted to vote.

What law governs whether my felony conviction limits my right to vote?

The impact of a criminal conviction on the right to vote varies widely from state to state. Whether you can vote after being convicted of a crime is determined by the state in which you live, not the state in which you were convicted.

Can I vote while I'm incarcerated in Maine?

In Maine, the fact that you have been convicted of a crime does not affect your right to vote.

If you are a resident of Maine, you can vote even while you are incarcerated. To vote, you must utilize Maine's absentee ballot procedures. If you are a resident of another state who is temporarily incarcerated in Maine, you may be able to vote an absentee ballot in your home state. You need to consult the law of your home state regarding both criminal convictions and absentee ballots to see if this is a possibility.

What if my conviction was for a federal crime?

If you are a resident of Maine, the same rules apply whether you were convicted of a federal or state crime. You are still eligible to vote.

What if I was convicted in another state?

The same rules apply for those who want to vote in Maine, even if their conviction occurred in another state.

What happens if I move to another state?

If you move to another state, your right to vote will be controlled by the laws of that state.

What are Maine's other voter registration requirements?

To vote in Maine, you must:

- be a U.S. citizen
- be a resident of the State of Maine
- be at least 17 years to complete a voter registration application and at least 18 years old to actually vote
- be registered to vote in the municipality where you live

When do I need to register to vote?

In-person registration is available year-round in Maine. For mail-in registration, however, registration is not available during the 9 days prior to an election. Mail-in registration reopens the day after the election.

Where do I go to register?

Registration is available at many places in Maine, including:

- Motor Vehicle branch offices
- State and federal social service agencies
- By mail